

**"...and the home
of the brave."**

Vikinga Saga

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Bon Bon

Northwest High School
Celebrating 50 Years
Grand Island, Nebraska
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Issue 7

Lone Survivor, Westboro Church show the best & worst of humanity



Laura Springer

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I recently watched Lone Survivor, a movie based on a true story of four brave US soldiers that faced a moral dilemma in the midst of war. It was one of those movies that makes you take a step back and realize just how blessed you truly are. We are lucky enough to have people putting their lives at risk on a daily basis just so we can continue to live in freedom. Our soldiers do so much for us, and it blows my mind that people could use the freedoms they fight for against them.

The Westboro Baptist Church is a "church" located in Topeka, Kansas that consists of around 40 members, mostly family, was started by Fred Phelps in 1991. This church travels around not only the US, but around the world to protest funerals of US soldiers and spread their hatred of gays and jews.

I've personally experienced this group at Husker football games. I was much younger at the time, but now that I realize exactly what was going on, I'm outraged. I do not understand how these people are okay with the discrimination and hatred they promote. The church has been sued by the family of a deceased military man for emotional distress at the funeral; the Supreme Court ruled 8-1 in favor of the church. Their reasoning for this ruling is that under the 1st amendment all US citizens have a right to free speech and peaceful protest. I completely agree with the basic right of free speech, but I think there are certain extents and lines that shouldn't be crossed. The sacrifices our soldiers make for our country are ones that are hard to even comprehend. It is in no way right to disrespect these sacrifices; especially those whose sacrifice is their life.

The reason the Westboro Baptist Church gives protesting the funerals of military

personnel is because they claim that God is punishing America for tolerating gays. That in itself shows the oxymoron in these people's religion. Most followers of Christ believe in spreading love and practicing tolerance; not spreading hatred and showing contempt for their country and the people whom protect them.

Phelps, founder of the church, was actually excommunicated from the church a few months ago for standing up for someone who was given a harsh punishment. He recently passed away; he will not have a funeral. There was much talk of protesting his funeral to get back at the family for all the emotional torment they've caused so many. I am glad there was no funeral, and therefore no picketing. Fighting fire with fire is a fight no one can win. By Americans being the bigger person in this affair, we can show our support for our troops by showing respect for the rights they protect for us.

Viking Saga

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Outside submissions, suggestions, or letters to the editor are welcome and encouraged. They may be brought to room 32, or emailed to Ms. Kavan at bkavan@ginorthwest.org. Any and all submissions must be signed for them to be considered for publication, and the editor reserves the right to edit or print any submissions.



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Student Survey

Do You Plan On Going Into The Military After Graduation?

Yes: 12%
No: 88%

If Yes, Then Why Do You Want To Join The Military?

Wanting To Serve The Country: 18%
Job Training: 9%
Scholarships: 27%
Other: 45%

Do You Have Family That Have Formerly Served, Or Are Currently In The Military?

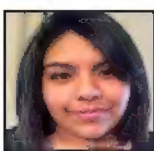
Yes: 79%
No: 22%

Do You Have Any Friends That Have Formerly, Or Are Currently Serving In The Military?

Yes: 49%
No: 52%

42 Responses

Don't send our troops into a pointless war



Bibiana Luevano

STAFF WRITER

For years, there has been a controversial argument concerning the act of sending both men and woman overseas in the pretense of war. These brave acts of our fellow citizens are not something to be disregarded so easily, nor should they become forgotten. There are those with dedication and determination so strong and powerful, that they will go through any lengths in order to preserve the virtues and ideals of the American people. Thus, these brave U.S. Troops place themselves in danger and overly stressful situations for the majority of their lives. They are forced to leave behind families and the life that they once knew, all for the sake of our own.

For this, I must say that I am thankful, since their hearts are in the right place. Their beliefs in fighting for our freedom and rights, along with the next generations, is virtuous and astounding. For many of us, these aspects are well known, and for others, war can merely seem like a mirage on the horizon.

I do believe that our troops are significant, and that they should remain fighting in the war, but only if circumstances are dire enough to require such an act. If the war has no real purpose, or will not produce any actual outcome that would accomplish a single goal, then I believe that the troops should be pulled.

As of now, American soldiers of varying sorts have been established within the perimeters of numerous third world countries. Our affiliations with other governments have either garnered something valuable,

or have been the cause of conflicting situations. Whether it is the troops within Syria, Afghanistan, or the rising tension between ourselves and Russia or North Korea, there still seems to always be the lingering taste of war brewing on the horizon.

Men and women should not be made to conduct such self-sacrifice without an actual cause. Within our society, powerful people may become corrupt, and those of us who are greedy and self-righteous, manage to see things with unclear eyes.

There are those who will start a war just for the profit of it, and others who will orchestrate a battle in order to establish a reputation of any kind to their name.

One must not rush into war, or beseechingly thrust American citizens in the midst of such violence. This, I conclude, is not worthy of the lives that are put on the line every day.

Siblings share feelings on father's deployment

Laura Springer
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Most students wake up every morning and see their parents at the breakfast table, or when they get home from school. But many students often forget those whose parents aren't so easily accessible. Students with military personnel in their family no all-to-well what it's like to not be able to see your parents or talk to them whenever you want.

Freshman Addie Dupler and junior Austin Dupler are two students that can testify to this. Their father is an FBI Agent for the United States Military. He has been a part of the FBI for sixteen years now.

The Dupler's father is currently deployed for one year in Afghanistan. But, this isn't his first time serving overseas.

"He went for about a year when I was in third grade," recalls Addie.

When he is deployed he gets to come home twice for

about two weeks at a time. This doesn't sound so bad, but each day he's away in one less day they get to spend with him.

"Having him gone is not fun at all. He doesn't get to see any of our activities or be here for any holidays," said Addie.

She is involved in piano, choir, musical, show choir, and dance. Most kids are calmed by seeing their parents in the stands at their games or in the auditorium at competitions, but for the Duplers it is a little different knowing one parent can't be there.

"I play soccer, and it can be hard not having him there [at my games] since he doesn't get to watch me, but he tells me good luck before every game. I know he would be there watching if he could," said Austin.

Like days of games or competitions, holidays are harder to bear than regular days because of the emphasis on family.

"It's just a completely different vibe without him there.

It's kind of like 'the elephant in the room' where people know that he's gone, but they don't want to say anything about it," said Addie.

But it's not just on days of activities or on holidays that the siblings miss their father. Everyday life just is not the same for them without him around.

"It is pretty hard [having my dad deployed] as a junior in high school. Just not having him here when I need help is hard. But since we Skype almost every night it makes it a little easier since I can talk to him," said Austin.

The Duplers story is like that of many other students around the country whom's parents, or even brothers or sisters, are fighting to protect freedoms granted by the Constitution everyday. This serves as a local reminder for everybody to never take anything, like being able to walk down the hall to talk to your mom or dad, for granted. Our troops do so much for the country, but it also important to remember the ones they leave behind when they go overseas.

History of the Month

March 1, 1872: Yellowstone becomes the first US national park.

March 3, 1931: The Star Spangled Banner becomes the National Anthem.

March 5, 1770: The Boston Massacre occurs.

March 6, 1950: Silly Putty is invented.

March 12, 1994: The Church of England ordained 32 women as its first female priests. In protest, 700 male clergy members and thousands of church members left the church and joined the Roman Catholic Church which does not allow women priests.

March 15, 44 B.C. : Julius Caesar was assassinated in the Senate chamber in Rome by Brutus and fellow conspirators.

March 24, 1958: Elvis Presley joins the U.S. Army.

March 27, 1964: An earthquake of the magnitude of 8.3 on the Richter scales strikes Anchorage, Alaska. It is still the biggest earthquake ever recorded.

Laura Springer
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

FUN FACT:
THE WORD
"NERD" FIRST
APPEARED IN
1950, IN THE
BOOK *IF I RAN
THE ZOO* BY
DR. SEUSS.

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HOME OF

A VARIETY OF BRANCHES OFFER A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES

Kyler Janeczek

STAFF CRITIC

When most people hear the term "military" there are a few stereotypical thoughts they probably have. For example, the word "army" probably jumps to mind right away. Of course, everyone knows about all the different branches, but do they know about the differences? Of course not. That's why this story is here, preluding into a long description of each branch. Oh, what fun!

First, there's the Army. Established in 1775 by Congress, and with George Washington as its first commander, this is the branch people tend to know the most about. The US Army is known as "the most powerful force in the world" due to the sheer number of soldiers and the strength of the individual men in it. They have bases located all over the world and troops on the ground in any combat situation, so they're basically the most well rounded branch.

The age range for joining the Army is the widest one out of all the branches- any one 18 to 41 years of age is permitted to enlist. A high school diploma, or an equivalent, is required. Those who enlist must pass a physical fitness exam and an ASVAB test before going through a 10-week basic training program. After graduating college, one can become an officer as well, after taking part in the ROTC program.

The Marines, also formed in 1775, are both similar to the Army and very different at the same time. Priding themselves on a code

of honor, courage, and commitment, the Marines

produce soldiers of both intense physical and characteristic strength. In combat, Marines are usually the first on the ground.

The Marines generally only accept enlistees with a high school diploma, but they accept a small amount of GED holders each year. Those who enlist must be between

the ages of 18 and 29. If accepted, they then go through an intense 12-week training course that toughens them mentally and physically; this eventually earns them the right to wear the uniform. It is regarded as an extremely tough branch to get in to.

The US Navy, officially formed in 1775, was almost disposed of after the Revolutionary War, but was kept around due to issues with pirates in the 1790's. As one may expect, they deal with problems at or under the sea, though sometimes their tasks require them to venture on land or up into the air.

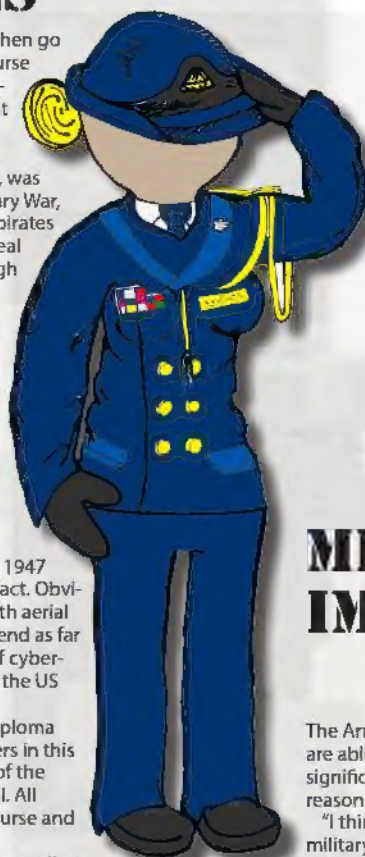
Anyone 18 to 35 with a high school diploma or GED can be accepted, and then sent off to a 9-week camp to learn to become a sailor. Just as it is in those other branches, the ROTC program is encouraged for those wishing to become officers. The career options go past just life at sea, and are extremely extensive.

The Air Force was one of the most recently formed branches. It wasn't until 1947 that it was viewed as its own branch, in fact. Obviously the branch is mainly concerned with aerial combat, but the views of the branch extend as far out as space, and even to the business of cyberspace; they are very involved in keeping the US secure as well as protected.

Anyone 18 to 27 with a high school diploma can join. Those wishing to become officers in this branch must meet all the requirements of the others, but take an additional test as well. All recruits undergo an 8.5 week training course and at the end they are considered airmen.

The last branch is the Coast Guard. The smallest and most recently formed branch, (the current version formed in 1967) they operate closely with the Navy in wartime. Otherwise, they perform search and rescue missions, provide law enforcement, and occasionally do environmental cleanup. High school graduates from 18 to 27 are accepted. The requirements and promotion opportunities are all the same as the previously stated methods.

With so many career opportunities that are easily accessible, it's easy to see why so many people opt to go into the military so soon after high school. It's not for everyone, but the military is clearly a considerable option for those who think it could work for them.



MILITARY SERVICE IMPACTS FRIENDSHIP

Adrian Arroyo

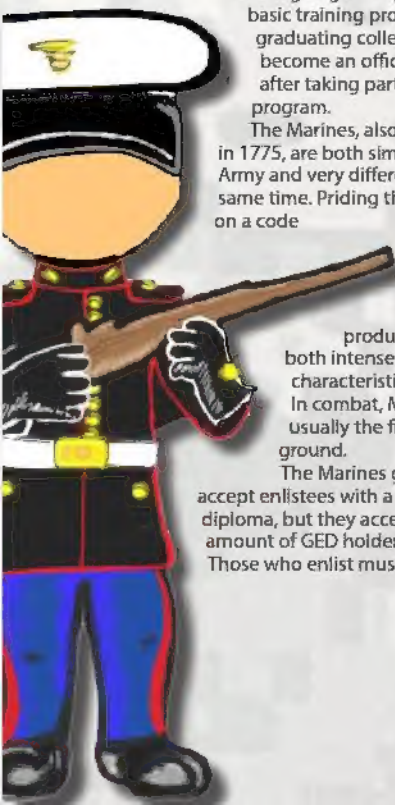
STAFF WRITER

The Armed Forces affect a lot of people. Whether they are able to notice it or not, the effects may be more significant than one may think. Everyone has their own reason of joining the military.

"I think that a lot of the reason why people join the military is because they want to make a difference, they want to be someone- someone important. Having a best friend in the Army makes me realize what kind of strength it really takes. Such a job changes you," said senior Molly Rafferty.

A lot more people are turning to the military as a job, but it's not like most other jobs. When people join the military, they sign a contract stating that they are going to devote themselves 100%.

"Having a really good friend in the Marines affects me a lot. Not being able to see him everyday, or at least twice a week, does make me sad. I never know



THE BRAVE

FAMILIES NEVER REMAIN UNTOUCHED

Melissa Frias
STAFF WRITER

Choosing to be part of the country's proud and protective military, no matter what branch one chooses, is still one of the highest honors. It is a very big life decision that not only affects the lives of the one choosing this, but for his or her family that must say goodbye to their loved one and wait until they can return home. Three students know first hand what it's like to see a family member off, or live off military base from military base as a normal practice.

Senior Anna Ruvalcaba's brother, Tom Ruvalcaba, has been serving in the US Army for four years. It was a life changing and difficult decision he had to make, but it was even harder on Anna and her mother. But, at least this career choice didn't come as a complete shock to the Ruvalcabas.

"He's always wanted to be in the army since he was little. We knew it was going to happen eventually," Ruvalcaba said. Seeing a family member protect the nation is both an honor and a heart breaking feeling, mainly due to the distance.

"I [really hate] that he has to be away for so long. If I could change something, it would be that his duty station be closer to home," Ruvalcaba said. Ruvalcaba and her mother take an chance to communicate with Tom as often as they possibly can; they always find themselves missing a piece of their family. Regardless, they are proud of the choice that he has made to protect their country and are honored to have such a brave guy in their family.

Senior Kaylin Johnson's father has been in the military longer than she has been alive. Growing up, the Johnsons have seen their father don the camouflage uniform to protect the United States.

"My dad has been in the army reserve for 20 years," Johnson said. Living in a household where the military was around every corner has greatly impact the life of Johnson.

"My dad has never tried to talk me into it. It has always been my dream," Johnson said.

The hardest part in growing up in a military household was not easy. Seeing her father off was one of the hardest things Johnson had to do. The distance and time was hard for Johnson and her family. Being without her father was hard.

"[If I could change something,] I would change deployment lengths. It takes a toll on a family," Johnson said. Seeing a family member is hard enough, especially when one has been seeing it since they were in high school. Johnson admitted to having to grow up fast to show strength to her father.

Regardless of the pain, Johnson is still very proud of her father's sacrifice. Even though Mr. Johnson had a family to support, he still decided to also support his country that gave him so much.

"It takes a lot to sign your life over to protect the country and he has gone way beyond and re-enlisted," Johnson said.

It's not easy for soldiers to uproot their families and then have to leave them behind.

"In active duty, military soldiers and their families are restationed every four years. Moving wasn't so bad. It gave me a sense of adventure," Johnson said.

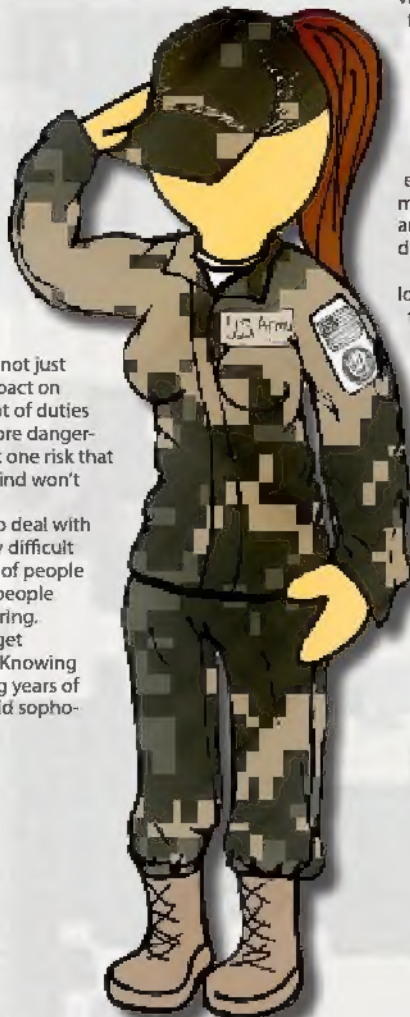
CE OFTEN SHIPS

when he's going to come back, or if he even will come back," said senior Katie Durand.

When someone joins the military it's not just impacting them, it's leaving a huge impact on their friends and families. There are a lot of duties these people have to take on, some more dangerous than others. But there's always that one risk that the friends and families they leave behind won't get to see them again.

"Us, as the friends and family, have to deal with a lot of emotional pain that's extremely difficult for anyone to deal with, yet thousands of people go through it anyways to support the people that they love," said senior Audrey Mhering.

"It's scary to think about those who get deployed that are new to parenthood. Knowing that you won't get to see the beginning years of your child's life is a very scary thing," said sophomore Jonathan Murphy.



Answer

Spring musical cuts loose with *Footloose*

Jennifer Clement

STAFF WRITER

Music, laughter, and lots of dancing are some of the things to expect when seeing Northwest's production of the well known musical, *Footloose*.

Every March, the school's music department puts on an extravagant performance that brings in hundreds of spectators per show.

"[The best part of being a lead is that] even though it is a lot of hard work, and [it can be very] frustrating at times: the pay off is tremendously amazing. I think that when you actually perform it, and do it to your best ability is the best part. You feel so accomplished. This musical has definitely been my favorite," said senior Victoria Goerl, who played Rusty.

The preparation begins in December starting with auditions. All students involved in the school have the option to audition for a lead role, a core singer, or a core dancer.

After the cast list is posted, rehearsals begin. Regular choir class periods turn into *Footloose* rehearsals.

Footloose is about a teenaged Ren McCormack moving from the big city of Chicago to the lifeless town of Bomont. He is flabbergasted to find that dancing is illegal.

With the help of his friends, he hopes to rewrite the laws and go against the strict town, and Reverend Shaw Moore.

Along the way to freedom, he makes friends, enemies, and unexpectedly finds love.

"[I really like] dancing and singing the different numbers. Those are the best parts. It is somewhat what I thought it would be. I have seen Northwest's musicals before, so I had an idea of what to expect. But it is a little new because I have not been in one before" said freshmen Christopher Rosenlund.

With a full cast of one hundred and thirty students, a crew of twenty four, and twenty nine leads, the musical season came to an end with its final show on March twenty third. Three months of after school and late night rehearsals lead to the final results as everyone said their last "Everybody Cut *Footloose*!"



Ren McCormack, played by junior Dakota Rader, learns that dancing is illegal within the town limits of Bomont. Photo credit by Northwest yearbook staff

Clockwise

Senior Mackenzie Burnham, as Ariel Moore, talks to Ren. Mackenzie Burnham and senior Seth Redwine who plays Chuck Cranston, meet each other after church. Junior Austin Stutzman plays Reverend Shaw Moore preaching in church. Seniors Katie Aguilar, Victoria Goerl, and Madeline Butler plays Ariel's best-friends Urleen, Rusty, and Wendy Joe. Willard Hewitt played by sophomore Isaiah Daws and his friends tell Ren about his mama. Rusty can no longer hide her love for Willard. Photo credit by Northwest yearbook staff



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Ask Bon Bon <3

Q: So I have a friend my boyfriend doesn't exactly like, same the other way around. I love them both, but I am not choosing. Any advice?

- HELP HELP HELP!

A: First off... Of course I have advice, I'm BonBon. Second, you need to talk to them both. Find a way to reach a logical compromise. Make them understand that you want both of them in your life. And, if they're making you choose, your "friend" isn't a good friend and your "boyfriend" isn't worth your time. You have the right to have whomever you want in your life.

Q: My boyfriend still has pictures of his exes on his phone and he knows it bothers me, but he refuses to delete them.

- Ughh!!! Help me Bon Bon.

A: Um??? What??? Well, if he's not willing to delete the pictures of his exes, then he clearly isn't giving you 100%. You should also ask him why he wants to cling onto these old memories. It could be a clear sign that he is not over them. Oh, and is his name, "Player"???? Because he sure sounds like one.

Q: I have a problem. I promised my friend that we would go to prom together; she bought a very expensive dress, but I remembered my boyfriend had already made plans for him and I.

- I am in a pickle!

A: Well, this all depends on what the word "promise" means to you. If you promised your friend you'd go with her to prom, then you should go to prom with her. Prom is a once in a life time thing, you have other days with your boyfriend you can spend.

Q: I have a problem with someone. She kind of picks on me and tries to get in my personal life!

- Help!!!

A: You tell someone! You shouldn't have to deal with that! That person clearly has so many insecurities that she has to take it out on people who aren't able to defend themselves. You have the power to do something, anyone has the power to make a change.

Q: My boyfriend refuses to let me hangout with my best friend. My friend is trying to get along with my boyfriend for me, but my boyfriend won't budge. What do I do?

- Breakdown

A: If your boyfriend isn't willing to fix things for you, then he isn't worth it.

If you have any more questions, feel free to leave them at my box! The school year is almost over, you need to address these questions now!!!! Love you all,

BonBon

Lovers of history and dogs should take a crack at this book....

Bibiana Luevano

STAFF WRITER

There are those of us who believe war deals only with the lives of men and women; sons and daughters, parents and grandparents.

These are the loved ones who have spent a major part of their years learning to fight for the survival and protection of our nation, to conduct such acts unbefitting for youngster's ears, and to sacrifice a life of luxury and peace in order to ensure the comfort of others.

Yet, there is one soldier who almost always remains overlooked.

A single soldier engrained with loyalty and skills that are rare even amongst the ranks of humans everywhere.

This dedicated trooper also contains a sense of intelligence and an astounding amount of abilities that manage to help civilians across the globe. This, of course, is man's very own best friend.

Cracker! The Best Dog in Vietnam, is a story riddled with the tales and adventures of a lone German Shepard as she embarks on a quest of discovery and trust.

So, allow for me to divulge you a little on the journey of a dog's act of service, not only to the U.S. as a whole, but to her very own best friend.

The point of view from which the story is told mainly switches from Cracker to Rick, a new soldier who was assigned to become her dog handler.

Cracker's story begins normally enough, merely a one-year old, one-hundred and ten pound dog who enthusiastically wishes to kill a runaway mouse.

Sadly, all that changes after certain circumstances that tear Cracker and her previous owner apart. She is easily

drafted into the army, despite her previous injury of a broken hip, and is paired up with Rick, a young man who wishes to "whip the world".

The partnership does not start out smoothly and it takes time and work for Cracker and Rick to conduct training together nicely.

All seems well, until the day they begin to head out for Vietnam; a land that is riddled with dangerous outcomes and devastating realities.

Through this time, the bond of friendship

is tested and the true meaning of loyalty and trust is revealed.

When reading this book, the world just may catch a glimpse of the true heights in which a dog and her handler will strive to reach to protect our country as well as their own hearts..

This book is written at a level for both adults and young ones alike. While sporting three hundred and eight pages this book will captivate your attention to where time seemingly flies by and at the same time, it will tug at your heart strings.

I enjoyed this story written by Cynthia Kadohata. It was a wonderful story that showcased the strength of friendship. I recommend this book for animal lovers, and war enthusiasts alike.



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